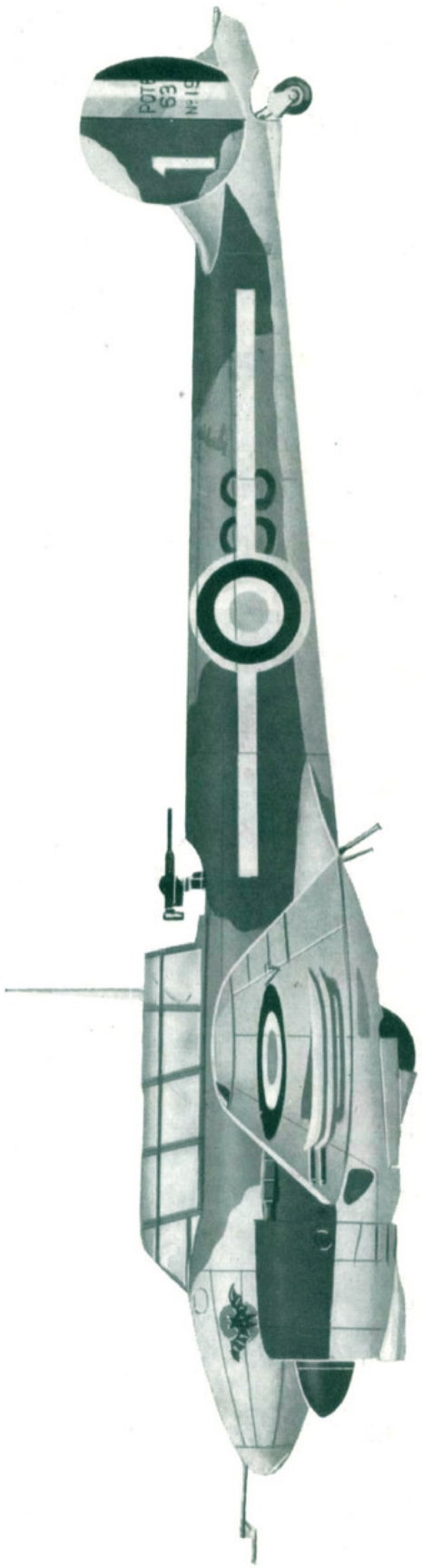
PROFILE
PUBLICATIONS

The Potez 63 Series



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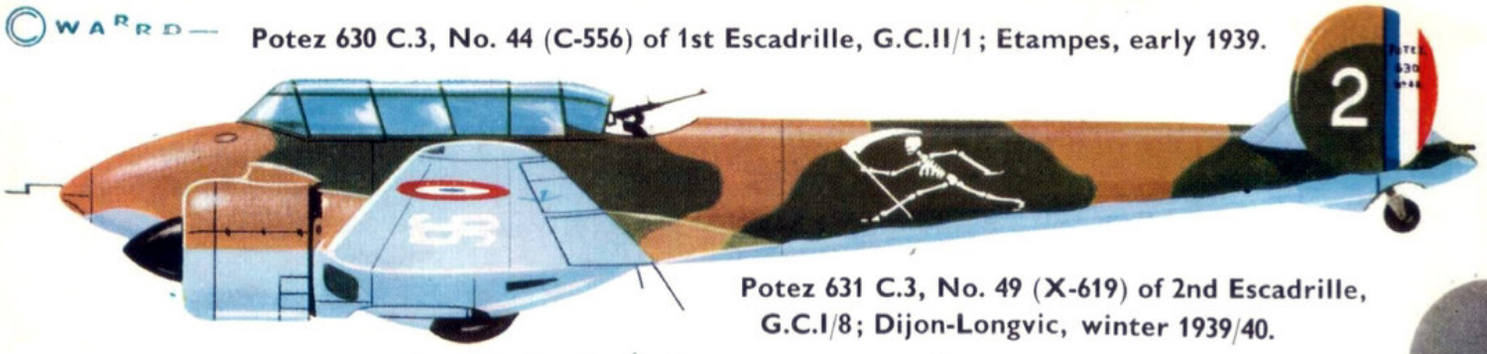
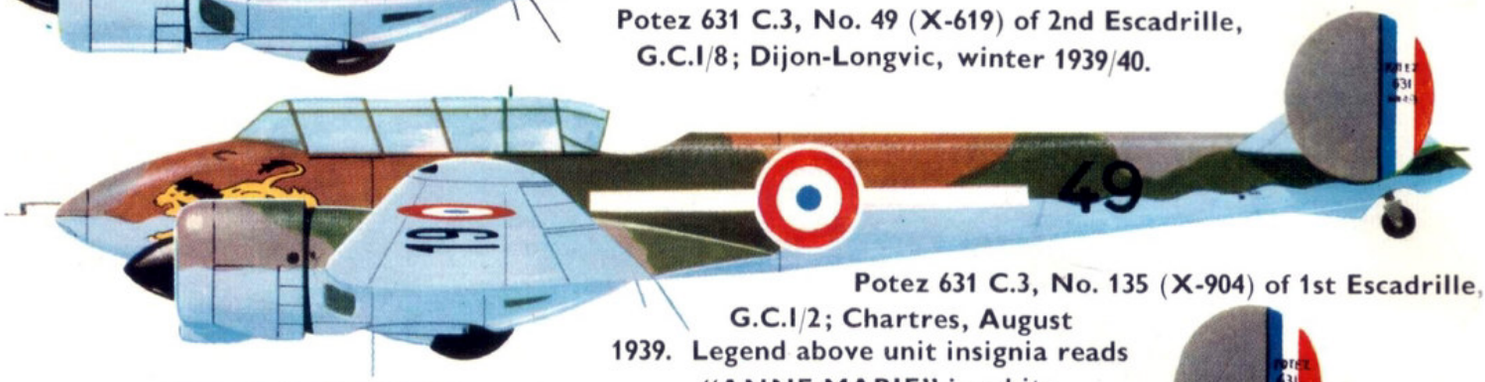
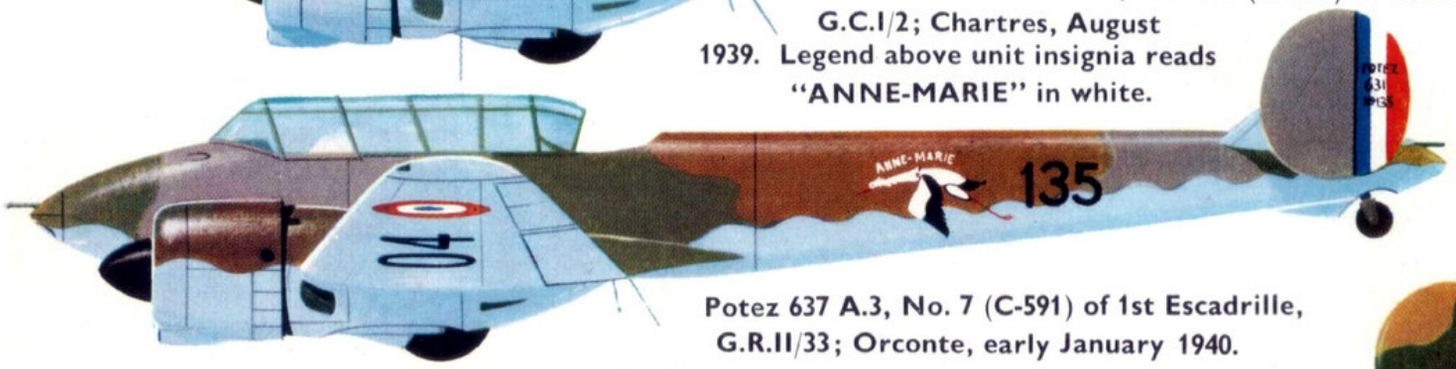
Potez 630 C.3, No. 44 (C-556) of 1st Escadrille, G.C.II/1; Etampes, early 1939.



Potez 631 C.3, No. 49 (X-619) of 2nd Escadrille, G.C.I/8; Dijon-Longvic, winter 1939/40.

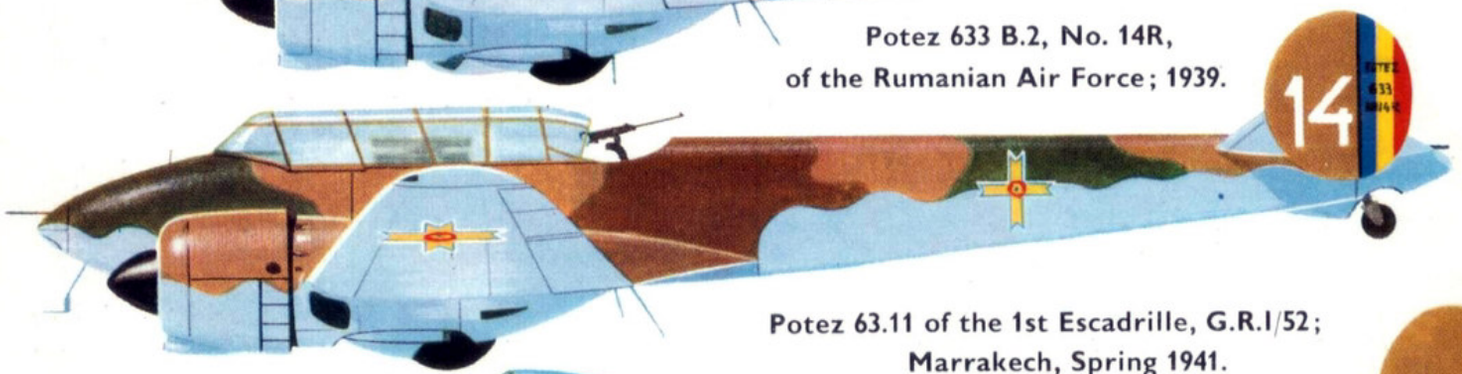


Potez 631 C.3, No. 135 (X-904) of 1st Escadrille, G.C.I/2; Chartres, August 1939. Legend above unit insignia reads "ANNE-MARIE" in white.

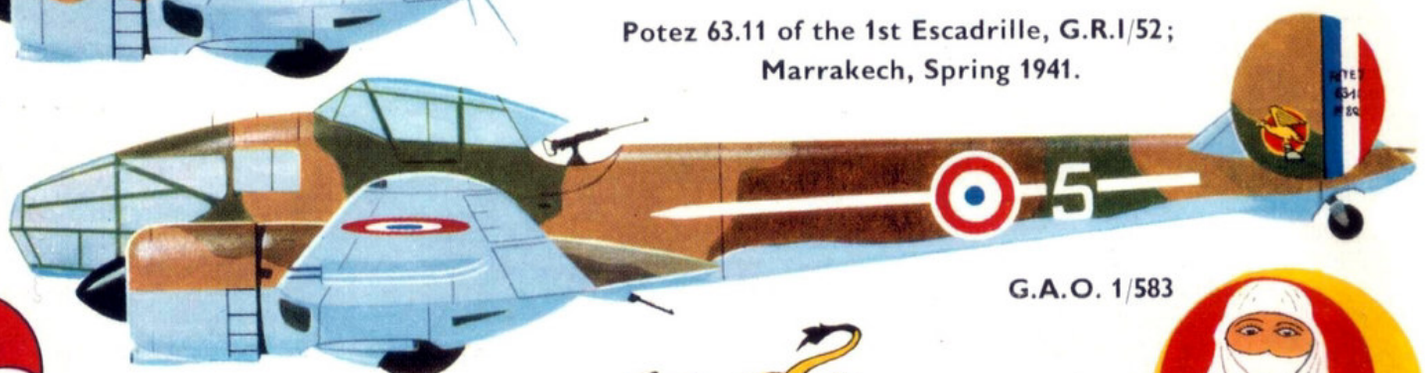


Potez 637 A.3, No. 7 (C-591) of 1st Escadrille, G.R.II/33; Orconte, early January 1940.

Potez 633 B.2, No. 14R, of the Rumanian Air Force; 1939.



Potez 63.11 of the 1st Escadrille, G.R.I/52; Marrakech, Spring 1941.

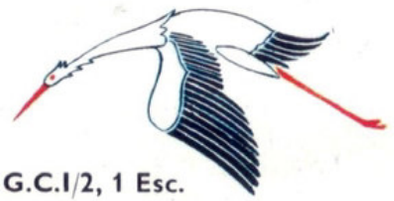


G.R.II/33, 1 Esc.

G.C.I/8, 2 Esc.

G.A.O. 1/583

Rumania



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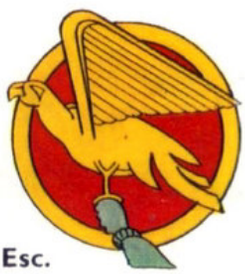
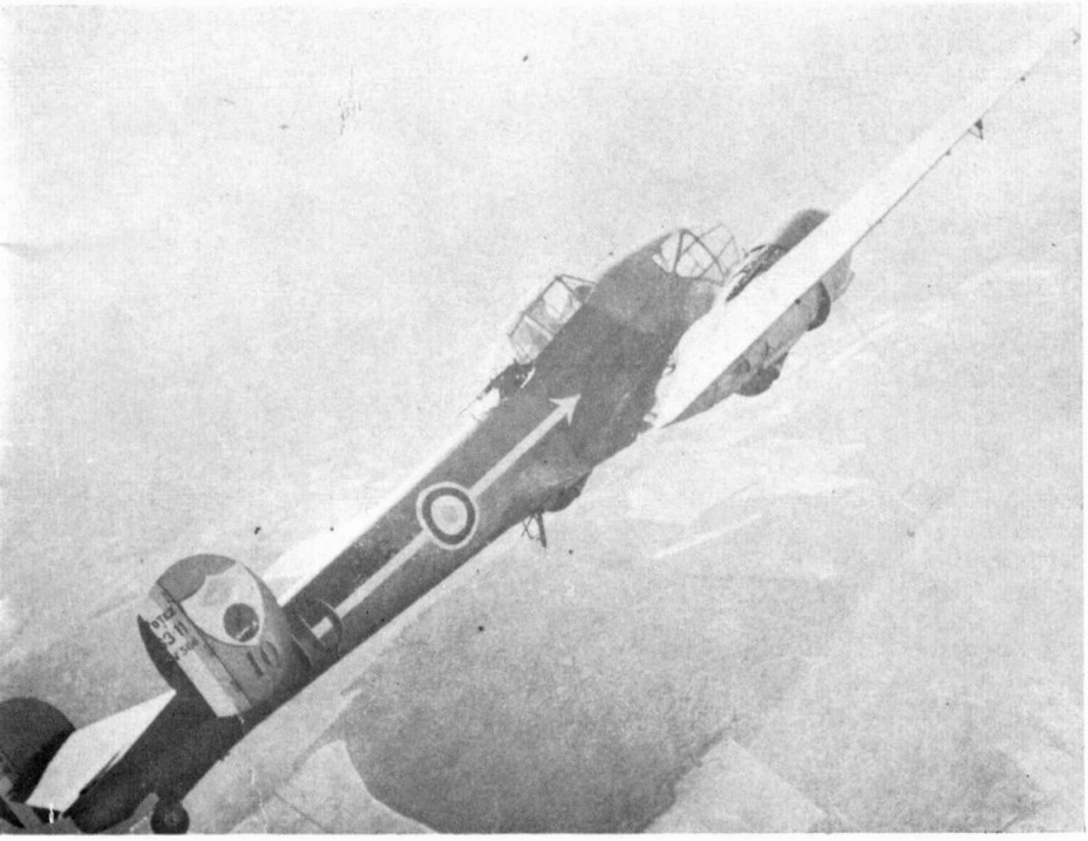


G.R.I/52, 1 Esc.

G.C.II/1

The Potez 63 Series

by Raymond Danel



Potez 63.11, No. 366, in the markings of G.R.II/14, flying over Avignon in 1941. (Unless otherwise indicated, all photographs appearing in this Profile are supplied from the author's collection.)
Photo: E.C.A.

At the time of the Franco-German armistice in June 1940 the Potez 63 was the most numerous French warplane. When the Potez 63 assembly lines fell into German hands shortly before 25th June 1940 (the armistice date), 1,115 machines of five various types had been produced, a total far exceeding that of any other French warplane of the 1935-40 period. The five main variants were:

Potez 630 and 631 two/three-seat day and night fighters,
Potez 633 two-seat light bombers,
Potez 637 three-seat reconnaissance aircraft,
Potez 63.11 army co-operation three-seaters.

Thanks to its sound and very simple design, only 7,500 man-hours were required for the manufacture of a Potez 63, a figure similar to that of the single-engined Dewoitine 520 (see *Profile No. 135*) and only about half that of the Morane-Saulnier M.S.406 (see *Profile No. 147*). On this account a mean monthly production of 100 Potez 63 aircraft was maintained from January until June 1940. Originally designed as a multi-seat fighter (Potez 630 and 631), the basic airframe lent itself to development for a variety of rôles in an attempt to replace the obsolete machines equipping the *Armée de l'Air* in 1937-38.

The Potez 631 CN2 night-fighters were unable to prove their ability in this particular rôle because of the inefficient methods of detecting and locating enemy aircraft flying at night; they just did not have the opponents to combat. The Potez 630's were withdrawn from operational use because of their unreliable Hispano-Suiza engines but proved very useful in the training rôle as did the few Potez 633 B2 light bombers. They facilitated the conversion of assault units from their obsolete mounts to the new Bréguet 691 and 693 aircraft.

In the opening phase of the war, the "phoney war" period, Potez 631 C3 aircraft were operated as "warning" machines in conjunction with *Groupes de Chasse* flying single-engined fighters and contributed to several "kills" in this way. Later when operated as day fighters on their own account, they proved to be most disappointing due to their poor maximum speed, insufficient rate of climb and inadequate armament, although it must be recorded that their manoeuvrability was rated "superlative".

Often crossing enemy lines at high altitude on strategic reconnaissance missions, the Potez 637 A3's were frequently intercepted by patrolling Bf 109's but despite their shortcomings most of them managed to outmanoeuvre the German fighters and escape. However they often returned to base carrying injured crew members.

In the army co-operation rôle the Potez 63.11 machines of the *Groupes Aériens d'Observation* (G.A.O.) were not, as commonly stated, easy prey for Bf 109's when flying at low altitude but they suffered heavily at the hands of German (and Allied) groundfire. Proof of their defensive capacity was given on 9th June 1940 by a crew of G.A.O. 543 flying an eight-gun Potez 63.11. On being attacked by seven Bf 109's the French airmen succeeded in shooting down three of their opponents before being shot down themselves after all their guns had run out of ammunition.

The resemblance of the Potez 63 to the Messerschmitt Bf 110 (see *Profile No. 25*) resulted in a large number of casualties due not to the enemy, but to Allied ground fire and aircraft. A number of Potez 63's were shot down by poor spotters flying Bloch M.B. 152, Dewoitine D.520 and Hurricane aircraft; for instance Potez 637 No. 14 of *Groupe de Reconnaissance* (G.R.) II/33 was shot down near Verdun by two British Hurricanes on 21st December 1939. One crew member, unfortunately wounded, was able to escape by parachute. On another occasion, on 21st May 1940, being mistakenly attacked by a Dewoitine D.520, the crew of a Potez 631 of *Escadrille de Chasse de Nuit* (E.C.N.) 2/13 were forced to retaliate to save their lives and killed the D.520 pilot, Sous-Lieutenant d'Harcourt of G.C.II/3.

By the outbreak of the Second World War the Potez 63 series was obsolescent and should not have been made to fight in the ranks of French first-line aircraft, but they nevertheless acquitted their onerous tasks valiantly and served their crews well. In the history of the French Air Force and in the memories of those who flew them so bravely, the Potez 63's will not be forgotten.

THE BIRTH OF THE POTEZ 63

The French Air Ministry issued a specification on 31st October 1934 calling for twin-engine two/three-seat multi-purpose "*multiplaces légers de défense*"; this supplemented an earlier specification of 13th July 1934 for single-engine fighters. The "*multiplaces légers de défense*" were required to fulfil three tasks:

Fighter direction (as C3 three-seaters) from which the C.O. of a big fighter formation should be able to lead the manoeuvre of single-engined machines by radio.

Day attack (as C2 two-seaters) also to be used for escorting friendly army co-operation or bomber aircraft.

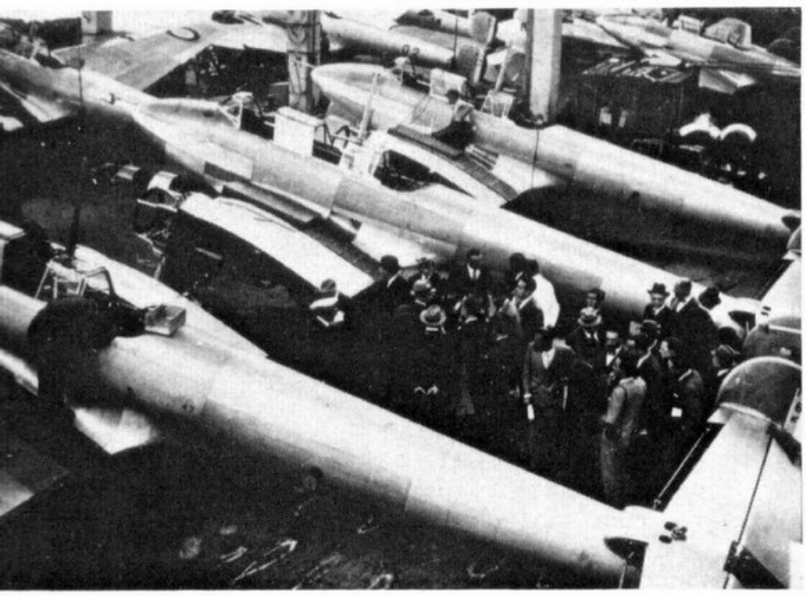
Night fighting (as CN2 two-seaters).

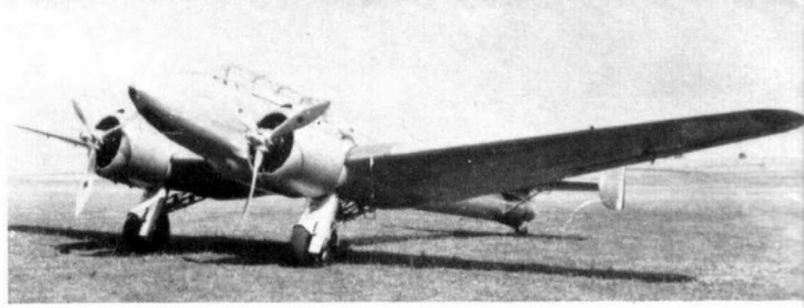
The specification called for a maximum speed of 450 km./h. (280 m.p.h.) at 4,000 metres (13,123 ft.), this height to be attained in less than 15 minutes; at the 320 km./h. (199 m.p.h.) cruising speed, endurance was to be over four hours. Armament was to comprise two fixed forward-firing 20 mm. cannon and a flexible machine-gun for rear defence. To provide a manoeuvrability comparable to that of a single-seat fighter, the maximum weight was originally restricted to three tonnes (6,600 lb.) although this was later raised to a 3·5 tonne (7,700 lb.) limit. The severity of the requirement meant that the power units had to be either ultra low-drag engines such as the 450 h.p. Renault or Salmson inverted-vee in-lines or 600 h.p. Hispano-Suiza of Gnome-et-Rhône double-row 14-cylinder radials.

The main proposals for this specification were the Hanriot H.220 (later developed into the N.C.600), the Loire-Nieuport 20, the Romano 110, the Bréguet 690 and the Potez 63. Two variants of the Potez design were proposed and these differed only in the engines installed, Hispano-Suiza radials in the Potez 630 and Gnome-et-Rhône engines in the Potez 631.

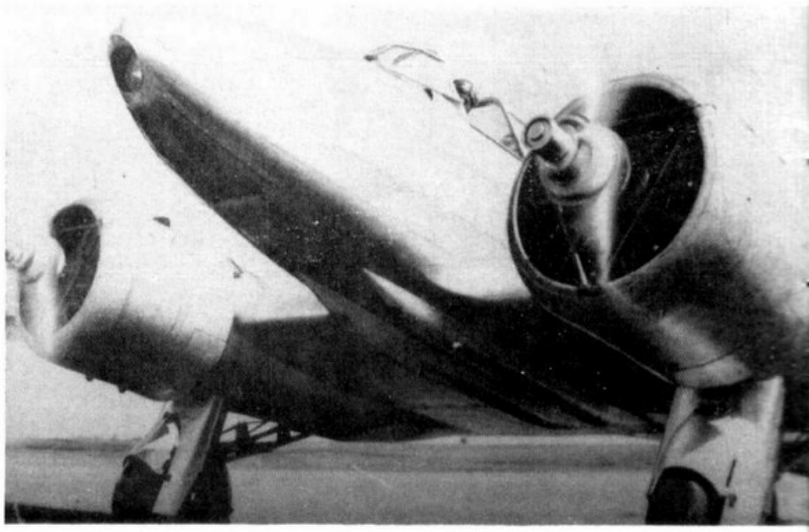
Each competing manufacturer was asked to produce first evaluation prototype at their own expense. Work on the Potez 630-01 commenced in April 1935 and it was the first machine completed, making its first flight from Méaulte on 25th April 1936 piloted by test pilot Nicole and fitted with 580 h.p. Hispano-Suiza 14 Hbs engines. At this time the prototype was experimentally equipped with a braced wooden horizontal stabiliser with no dihedral. On 6th May 1936 after losing an airscrew blade and the port engine the machine was slightly damaged on landing. After hasty repairs the prototype was transferred to Villacoublay on 3rd August and fitted with its definitive tail assembly and a new long-stroke landing-gear. Flight tests resumed on 20th November 1936 and the aircraft was delivered to the C.E.M.A. Villacoublay late in December for official testing. After a few minor modifications to improve its flying qualities, the prototype joined the Cazaux centre for armament trials.

Potez 630 Nos. 47, 48 and 49 on the Méaulte assembly line. (Photo: A.G.I.P. via M. Cristesco)





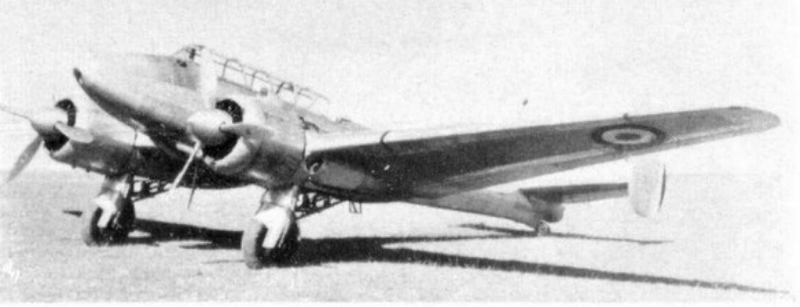
Two views of the prototype, Potez 630-01, showing braced tailplane and centre-section details.



The original engines were successively replaced by Hispano-Suiza 14 Ab 02/03 and 14 Ab 10/11 power units; these latter developed 640 h.p. at sea level, 700 h.p. for take-off with 940 mm. of mercury boost pressure and 725 h.p. at altitude. At the 3,850 kg. (8,488 lb.) maximum take-off weight (including 800 litres—176 Imp. Gals.—of fuel), the maximum speed was 460 km./h. (286 m.p.h.) at 5,000 metres (16,404 ft.). With a sea-level climb rate of 10·9 metres/sec. (2,086 ft./min.), time to 4,000 m. (13,123 ft.) was 5 min. 56 sec.; maximum range at 300 km./h. (186 m.p.h.) economical cruising speed was 1,300 km. (808 ml.).

The S.N.C.A.N. (*Société Nationale de Constructions Aéronautiques du Nord*) was officially constituted on 23rd December 1936 and grouped five factories together; on 1st January 1937 the Potez Méaulte and the Sartrouville plants were amalgamated and on 1st March the Mureaux plant joined the group; the Caudebec (from 1st April) and Le Havre (from 10th April) plants made up the five factories constituting the S.N.C.A.N. and altogether 5,496 people were employed.

Meanwhile the second prototype, designed Potez 631-01, had been completed and fitted with two slightly less powerful, but less bulky, Gnome-et-Rhône 14 Mars radials developing 570 h.p. at sea-level, 700 h.p. for take-off with 1,100 mm. of mercury boost pressure and 660 h.p. at altitude. The first flight was made from Méaulte early in March 1937



(Top) *Potez 630 CN2 No. 02;* (below) *Swiss Potez 630 B2: and* (bottom) *an instructional Potez 630 of the Vichy Air Force at Montpelier-Fréjorgnes late in 1941.*

and this prototype was also damaged after finishing a landing on its belly because the undercarriage had not locked properly in the "down" position. After repair the Potez 631-01 was handed over to the Villacoublay C.E.M.A. where official trials were initiated in November 1937.

During the months following its full establishment, the S.N.C.A.N. received a provisional order letter for 10 experimental machines to be evolved from the basic Potez 630. This total was to comprise four Potez 630 and three Potez 631 aircraft (one of them to be the existing Potez 631-01), two Potez 633 B2 light bombers and one Potez 637 A3 reconnaissance aircraft. When the order was confirmed by a contract, one of the Potez 633 light bombers was replaced by a Potez 639 AB2 low-level ground attack two-seater.

The external difference between the Potez 630 and 631 aircraft was the appearance of the engine cowlings; the Gnome-et-Rhône cowlings of the Potez 631 were of smaller cross-section, while the air intake for the oil radiator was located on the lower part of the Potez 631's engine cowlings but on the upper part of the Potez 630 cowlings. Similar to the Potez 631, the 633 B2 embodied a vertical bomb-bay between the two crew members. Also derived from the Potez 631, the Potez 637 A3 carried an extensively glazed gondola beneath the fuselage in which a prone observer could be carried.

PRE-WAR PRODUCTION ORDERS

In June 1937, a letter of order called for 10 two-seat "*Instruction*" and 30 three-seat Potez 631 day-fighters, the first five of these being scheduled for delivery eight months later. Since the mass production of Gnome-et-Rhône engines was not yet organised to meet deliveries at the same rate as Potez 63 airframes, 80 Hispano-Suiza-powered aircraft were also ordered. The first 48 of these were fitted with 14 Ab 02/03, and the remainder with 14 Ab 10/11 engines. When regular contracts replaced the provisional letters of order in December 1937, a further order called for 50 Potez 633 B2 machines, thus bringing the total order to 180 Potez 63's of all kinds, including 10 prototypes.

Late in 1937 and early in 1938 the Potez 63 attracted much attention in foreign countries preparing to re-equip their air forces. The Czech Avia concern obtained a licence for a C3 (three-seat fighter) variant designated Potez 636, but none had been completed before Czechoslovakia was annexed by the Germans.

Firm foreign orders were taken by S.N.C.A.N. for the following:

China; Four Potez 631 C3 and five Potez 633 B2.

Yugoslavia; Two Potez 630 C3 and one Potez 631 C3.

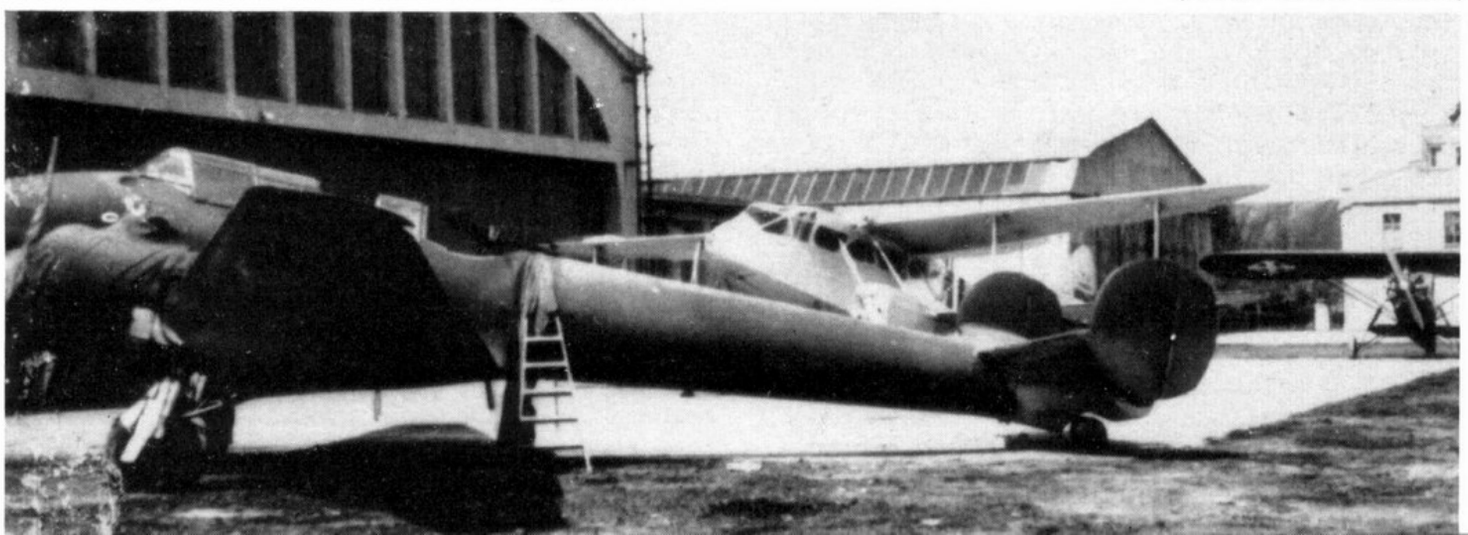
Rumania; Twenty Potez 633 B2.

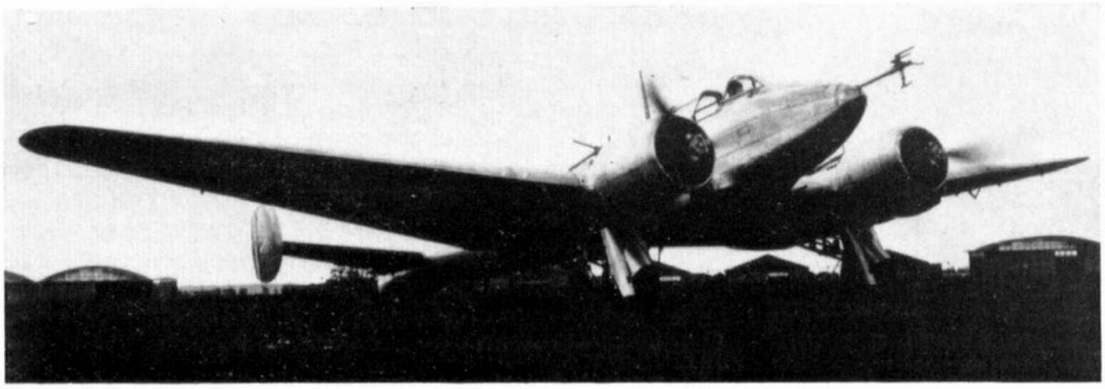
Greece; Twenty-four Potez 633 B2.

Switzerland; One Potez 630 C3 and one Hispano-Suiza powered Potez 633 B2. In April 1938 a Franco-Rumanian contract called for twenty further Potez 633 B2 for delivery to Rumania.

Production of the Potez 63 series commenced in May 1937, manufacture of the various components being shared out among the S.N.C.A.N. plants. Fuselages and tailplanes being built at Caudebec and

A rare view of the sole Potez 630 delivered to Jugoslavia. (Photo: via M. Cristesco)





The prototype Potez 631-01 at Villacoublay. (Photo: A.G.I.P. via M. Cristesco)

Potez 631 No. 175 of E.C.N. 5/13 at Loyette (Ain) on May 28th, 1940. Note the personal "Mickey Mouse" insignia on nose, and unpainted undersurfaces.
(Photo: via G. Dassenoy)

wings at Le Havre; initially assembly was undertaken at Méaulte but later at Les Mureaux after completion of a batch of Bloch 210 bombers.

The first production Potez 630 made its maiden flight from Méaulte in February 1938. The first machine to be accepted by the French Air Force was P.630 No. 8, on 23rd May 1938, being closely followed in the same month by three further machines. During its official testing P.630 No. 8 attained 448 km./h. (278 m.p.h.) at 4,000 m. (13,123 ft.), climbing time to this altitude was 7 min. 1 sec. The first Potez 631 to be officially accepted was No. 5 on 2nd August 1938 and this achieved a performance of 437 km./h. (272 m.p.h.) at 4,000 m., reaching this altitude in 5 min. 6 sec.

On 15th March 1938, Plan V was approved. This scheme covered the re-equipment and expansion of the *Armée de l'Air*; it was intended to order one of the twin-engined designs resulting from the 1936 specification which offered a far superior performance to that of the Potez 63, but none was ready for quantity production. For this reason, the Potez 631 CN2/C3 and 633 B2 were retained in the new production programme which initially called for 207 twin-engined day-and-night fighters (121 in first-line service) and 449 two/seat light day bombers (254 first-line).

The Potez 633 order was increased to 125 machines on 25th March 1938, but two months later the Air Staff requested that the light bombers be three-seaters. The Potez 633 orders were consequently cancelled and transferred to the Potez 631. It was also decided to withdraw the Potez 630 from first-line service because of troubles with the Hispano-Suiza engines and modify them as dual-control instructional aircraft. To allow for their replacement within the operational units by Potez 631's a further order for 52 Potez 631's was placed in June 1938, bringing the total on order to 207.

A provisional order for 60 Potez 637 reconnaissance aircraft was placed before the Potez 637 A3 No. 01 prototype had even flown (first flight October 1938). The order, placed in August 1938, was to expedite the replacement of obsolete Potez 542's in four *Groupes de Reconnaissance* (G.R.).

The French Air Staff encountered some difficulties in defining the requirements dealing with the T3 machines (*Triplaces de Travail*—Army Co-operation) intended to replace the obsolete single-engined Bréguet 27, Potez 39 and Les Mureaux 115 and 117 A2 two-seaters that equipped the *Groupes Aériens d'Observation*. It was decided to evaluate a new observation version of the Potez 63 proposed by the S.N.C.A.N. under the designation Potez 63.11. An initial order for three prototypes was closely followed by three production contracts, all placed before the end of 1938, calling for a total of 415 machines. The prototype P.63.11-01 A3 was first flown at Méaulte on 31st December 1938 and differed from its predecessors in having wholly redesigned forward and mid-fuselage sections. The rounded glazed nose of the prototype was replaced by an angular nose embodying flat plexiglass panels on subsequent machines in order not to distort the observer's vision.

Delivery of production Potez 63 was originally considerably delayed by a shortage of engines and also airscrews and cannon. The first batch of Potez 630's was armed with four machine-guns instead of two 20 mm. Hispano-Suiza cannon. It had been optimistically estimated that 201 machines would be in service on 1st January 1939, but only 45 Potez 630 and 27 Potez 631 aircraft were actually on charge at that date although 74 airframes were at the factory awaiting engines. Sixty P.631's were flown with provisional airscrews to allow them to be accepted by the air force; after the acceptance flight the airscrews were removed to fulfil the same rôle on some other aircraft! Nevertheless, the first 15 Potez 63's had taken part in the July 1938 Villacoublay Air Show and, late in September 1938, 17 Potez 630's began to replace the obsolete Bloch 200 bombers used as fighter direction machines by the Rheims, Dijon, Etampes and Chartres *Escadres de Chasse*.

JOINING THE RANKS

Seventy-seven Potez 630 and 88 Potez 631 machines had been accepted by the *Armée de l'Air* on 1st April 1939 and 67 Potez 630 and 20 Potez 631's had been put into service with the fighter units. Each single-engined C1 *Escadre de Chasse* had been allocated six machines and the Mureaux 113 CN2 machines of *Groupes de Chasse de Nuit* G.C.N.III/1 and II/4 had been replaced by Potez 630's which were in turn soon replaced by Potez 631's. (In May these units were redesignated G.C.N. I/13 and II/13.) Furthermore G.C.II/8 had abandoned its single-engined Morane-Saulnier M.S.225 and Dewoitine D.510 aircraft and reverted to the multi-seat day-fighting rôle with a

provisional establishment of 18 P.631's.

Late in April a fighter flight composed of four P.631's was formed at Marignane within G.A.O.550 which was then redesignated G.A.M. (*Groupe Aériene Mixte*) 550. In August 1939 a similar unit was formed overseas to reinforce the Djibouti colonial squadron.

The first Potez 637's began to enter service with G.R.I/33 and II/33 at Nancy in May 1939 and in the following month G.R.I/52 and II/52, at the same base, also began to equip with the type.

Shortly before the outbreak of World War Two in August 1939, thirty-seven Potez 63's had been released for export, and their detailed situation within the French Air Force was as follows:

Potez 630; Eighty-five on charge with 65 in the first-line. Eight with the 1st *Escadre de Chasse* (at Etampes), 12 with the 2nd (Chartres), nine with the 3rd (Dijon), one with the 4th (Rheims), eight with the 5th (Rheims), eight with the 6th (Chartres), nine with the 7th (Dijon), 10 in Tunisia, three of these with the 5th G.A.C. (*Groupe Autonome de Chasse*) at Tunis.

Potez 631; Two hundred and six on charge with 117 in the first-line, i.e. 18 with C.C.N.I/13 (Etampes), 21 with G.C.N.II/13 (Rheims), four with the 1st *Escadre de Chasse*, seven with the 2nd, six with the 3rd, eight with the 4th, six with the 5th, seven with the 6th, six with the 7th, 26 with the 8th, four with G.A.M.550 (at Ajaccio) and four with the Djibouti colonial squadron.

Potez 633; Twenty-two on charge (three ex-Chinese order and 19 ex-Rumanian order) with three in service from the 1st September 1939 with an experimental flight of G.B.I/54.

Potez 637; Sixty-one on charge, 53 in first-line service, i.e. 26 with the 33rd and 27 with the 52nd *Escadres de Reconnaissance* (at Nancy).

Potez 63.11; Five on charge, none in first-line service.

THE "PHONEY WAR" PERIOD

Potez 630 and 631; When the French Air Force began mobilising on 28th August, the machines of G.C.II/2 and two machines each from G.C.'s I/6, II/4, II/5, II/6 and II/7, i.e. two P.630's and 10 P.631's, were transferred to Clermont-les-Fermes and established as a provisional 5th *Escadrille* of G.C. II/2 to constitute *Escadrille de Guet* (Warning) I/16. The unit was redesignated E.C.M.I/16 (*Escadrille de Chasse Multiplace*) on 29th January 1940 with no further connection with G.C.II/2.

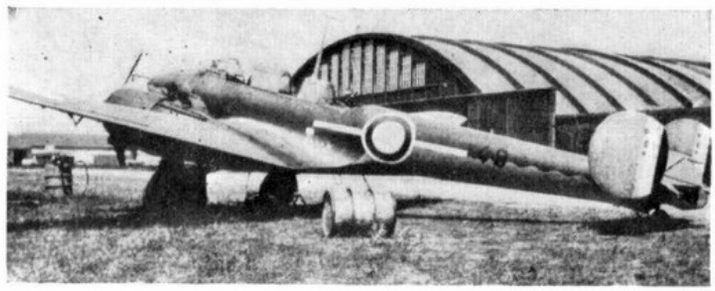
According to the pre-war scheme, a 5th *Escadrille de Chasse de Nuit*, originally called 2/562 was to be formed at Lyons-Bron on 16th October 1939 with 12 Potez 631 aircraft. On 1st January 1940 when the unit was effectively at full strength, it was redesignated E.C.N.5/13, and G.C.N.I/13 and II/13 were divided into four autonomous *Escadrilles* (1/13, 2/13, 3/13 and 4/13).

At the request of the *Aéronavale* (Naval Air Arm), a first batch of eight P.631's was transferred to *Escadrille de Chasse* AC1 at Cherbourg on 17th January 1940 to begin replacing its elderly Dewoitine D.376 C1 fighters. After formation of the 1st *Flottille de Chasse*, F1C, (comprising *Escadrilles* AC1 and AC2) at Calais-Marck on 6th March 1940, 17 P.631's from G.C.II/8 (converting to Bloch 152's) were delivered to the *Flottille* during March and April. The unit attained full strength in mid-May on receipt of its 26th aircraft.

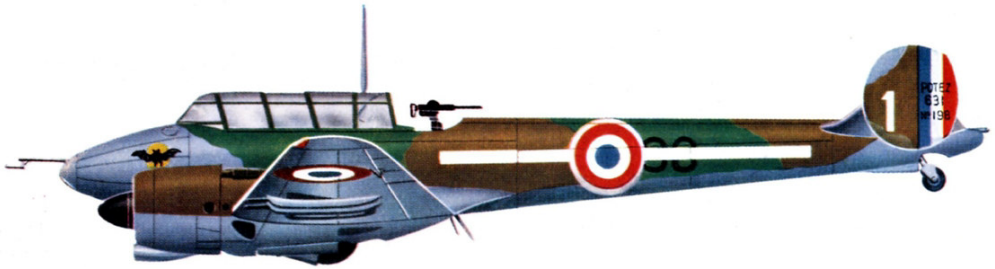
As a result of the adoption of a new war plan, "*Plan V bis*", in February 1940, directory flights within the *Groupes de Chasse* were disbanded and their P.630 and P.631 aircraft were withdrawn from operations. The few remaining P.630's were to be converted to dual-control instructional machines, while the P.631's were intended to raise the statutory strength of the E.C.N.'s from 12 to 18 aircraft.

The forward-firing armament of the P.631's (often one cannon and one 7·5 mm. machine-gun instead of

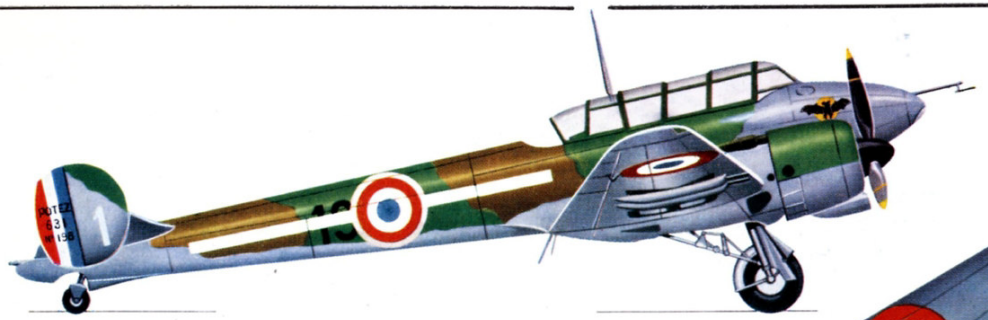
(*continued on page 10*)

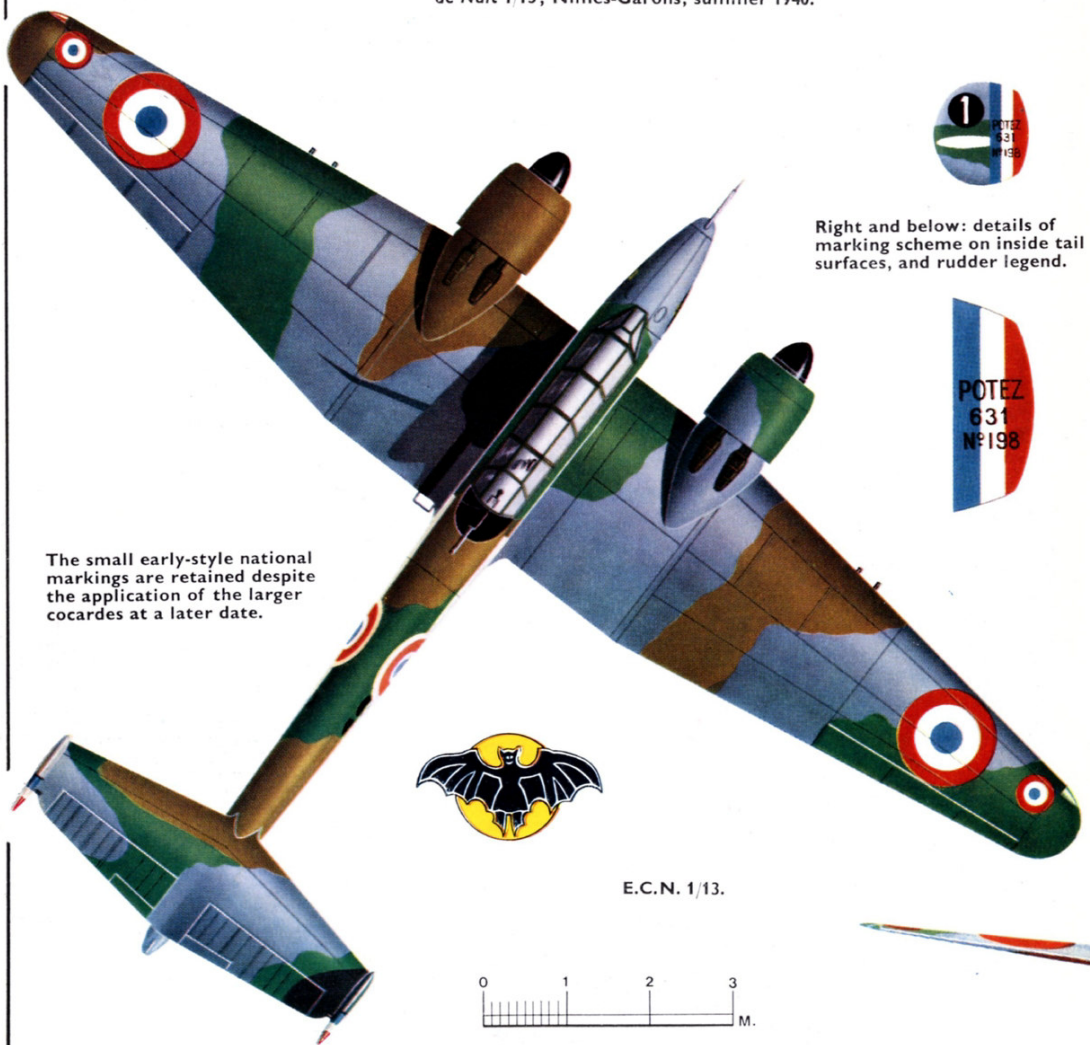


(Bottom) *Potez 631 No. 204 on an operational airfield in May 1940:* (top) *No. 49 (X-619) of 2nd Escadrille, G.C.I/8 at Dijon-Longvic in the winter of 1939-40: and* (above) *a crew of E.C.M.J. 1/16 boarding for a mission in the spring of 1940. (Bottom photo via Camouflage Air Club).*



Potez 631, No. 198 (X-967) of *Escadrille de Chasse de Nuit* 1/13; Nimes-Garons, summer 1940.

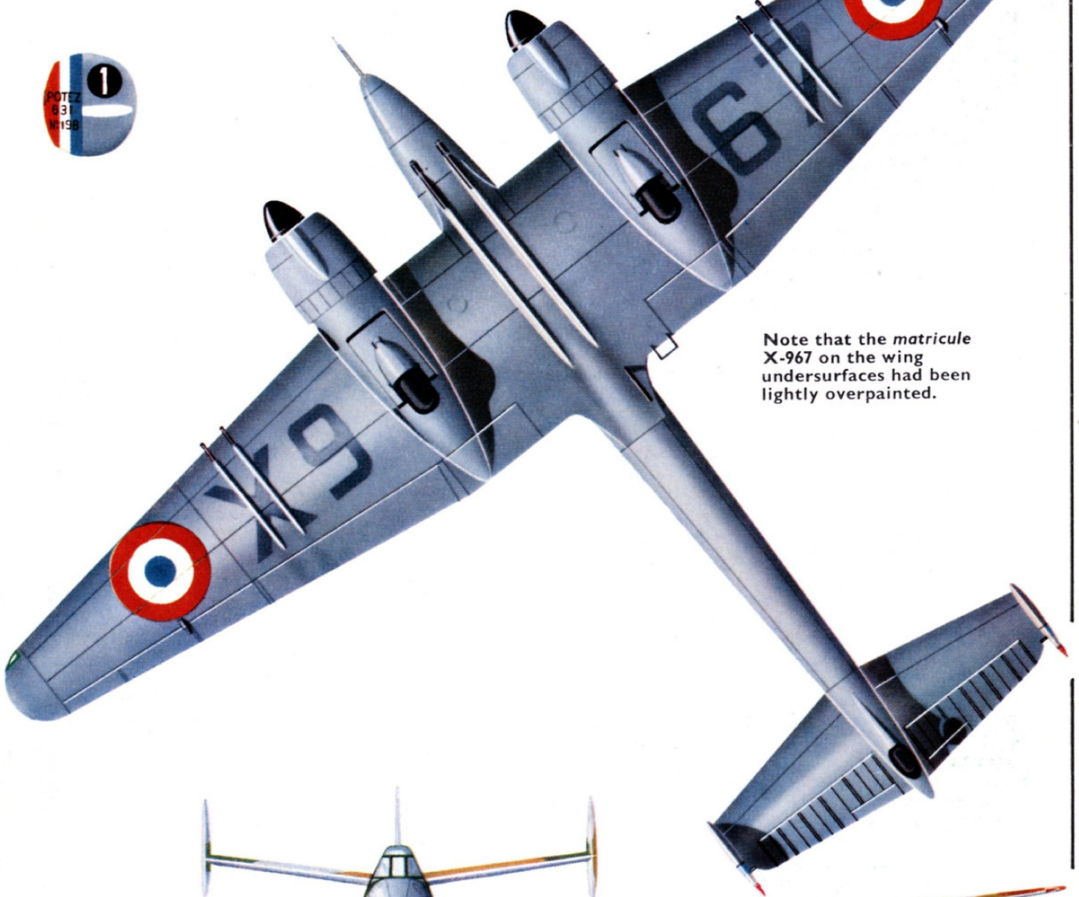




The small early-style national markings are retained despite the application of the larger cocardes at a later date.

Right and below: details of marking scheme on inside tail surfaces, and rudder legend.

E.C.N. 1/13.



Note that the *matricule* X-967 on the wing undersurfaces had been lightly overpainted.

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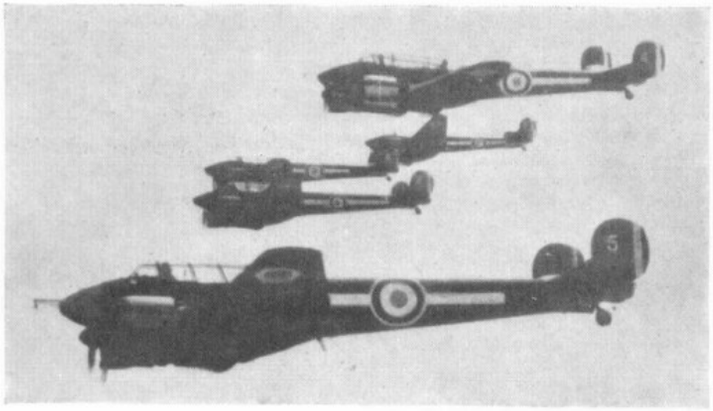
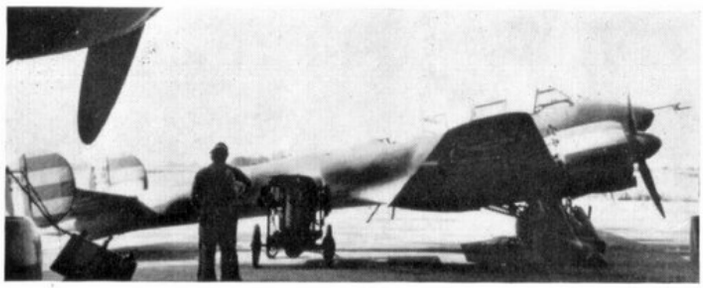


P.631's of E.C.N. 1/13; and (below) *P.631 No. 52 with an unidentified Vichy unit; both photographs were taken in mid-1942.* (Photo of No. 52, via E.C.A.)



the intended two cannon) had proved inadequate; it was therefore decided, on 8th February 1940, to gradually re-equip the machines with two cannon and four supplementary underwing machine-guns; this would also allow the aircraft to undertake ground attack missions. However, by 10th May 1940, only two modified P.631's were available, both at E.C.M.I/16.

Potez 633; Because of delays in delivery of the Breguet 691, Potez 633's originally ordered by foreign air forces were used for training the crews of *Groupes de Bombardement d'Assaut* (G.B.A.) I/54, II/54, I/51, II/51 and, from March 1940, G.B.A. II/35.

Groupements d'Assaut Nos. 18 and 19 of the 6th *Brigade de Bombardement d'Assaut* were established at Vinon in December and began pilot training with 40 to 60 hours on Potez 633's before converting to the Bréguet 691 and their operational mount, the Breguet 693.

In an attempt to assist Finland in her heroic struggle against Russia, a special expeditionary unit was formed at Vinon comprising volunteer crews of the 54th *Escadre* and 12 P.633's. This light bomber squadron, christened "*Finland*", left for Tangmere in England on 11th March 1940 but the Russo-Finnish armistice was signed before the unit could reach Finland.

Potez 637 and 63.11; The Potez 637 was the only modern aircraft serving in the ranks of the *Groupes de Reconnaissance*. These units had been forced to retain a number of Potez 542's as reserve and training aircraft due to a lack of spares for the P.637's. Seven *Groupes*, one of these in North Africa, were flying Bloch 131's as a temporary measure, two others still used the Potez 540 while G.R.II/39 in Syria still held antiquated Potez 25 TOE biplanes.

The reconnaissance units were scheduled for re-equipment with such modern types as the Potez 67 A3, the Bloch 174 and 175 A3, the Martin 167F A3 and the Amiot 351 A4. Unfortunately none of these was available at the outbreak of war and by 10th May 1940 only 27 Bloch 174's had been delivered and these were distributed among six *Groupes*.

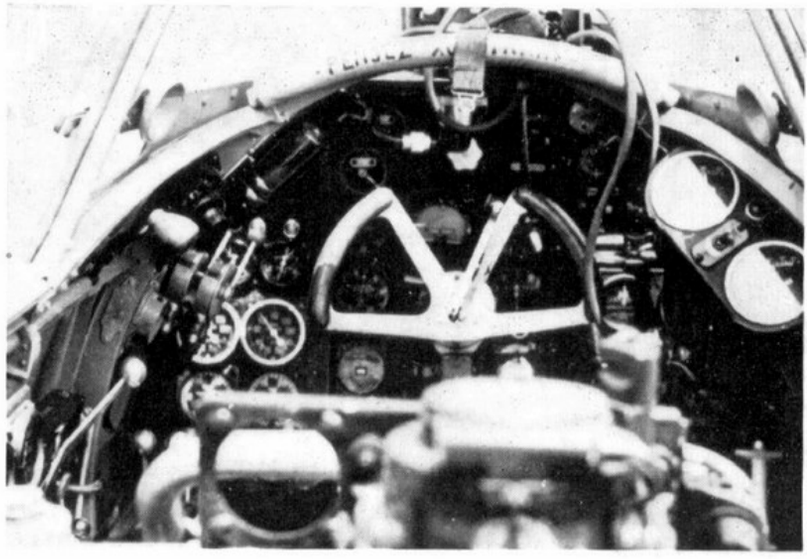
The first encounters with *Luftwaffe* fighters had shown that the Bloch 131's were quite unsuitable for day missions, but the vital necessity of keeping ground forces informed of enemy movements remained. The first Potez 63.11's were allocated by priority to the following G.R.'s at a rate of six each: 14th *Groupe Autonome*, G.R.I/22, II/22, II/55, I/36, II/36, I/35 and I/55. From November 1939 similar batches reinforced the four *Groupes* flying the P.637. As an example, G.R.II/33 flying strategic missions received P.63.II's No. 45, 153, 154, 156, 165 and 189 and gave up four Potez 532's and two Potez 637's. The P.637's were gradually withdrawn from operational service and modified as dual-control instructional machines, a step which proved to be unpopular with pilots who preferred the Potez 637 to the 63.11. The P.637 was considered to be more manoeuvrable and slightly faster than the 63.11. Most of the latter were fitted with wooden, fixed-pitch airscrews and, incidentally, were much more popular with observers, being more comfortable from their point of view.

At the beginning of the war, the 47 *Groupes Aériens d'Observation* (in effect autonomous *Escadrilles*) were in a pitiful condition. Every one of the 340 aircraft they could muster was obsolete; the units mustered a total of 250 machines in France comprising seven *Groupes* of Potez 390's, 10 with Bréguet 270's, nine with Les Mureaux 115's and nine with Les Mureaux 117's. These aircraft were supplemented by 28 LeO C.301 (licence-built Cierva C.30) autogiros, eight Potez 540, four Bloch 200 and a vast number of Potez 25's used as reserve and training aircraft.

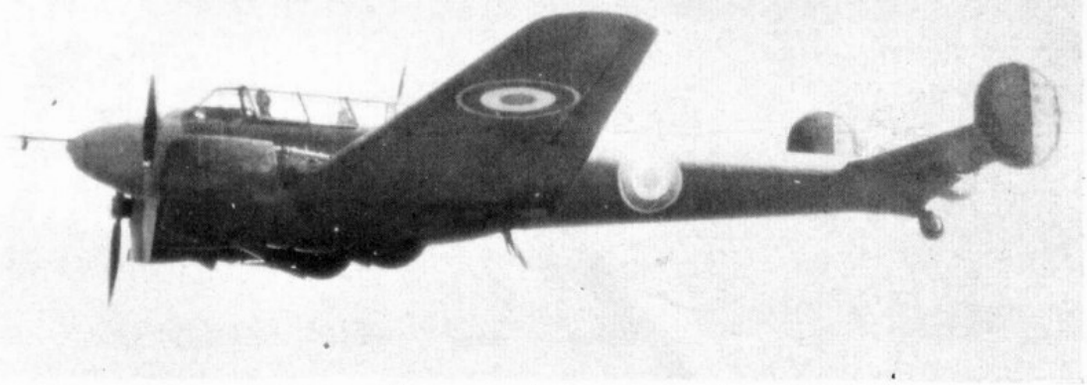
The Dewoitine D.720 T3 *Triplace de Travail*, scheduled for mass-production, had not been ordered at the outbreak of war because evaluation was not completed. New contracts were hastily placed for the Potez 63.11 and it was estimated that 860 would be in service by May 1940, by which time monthly output would be 150 machines.

A re-equipment scheme of November 1939 planned to have 12 G.A.O.'s equipped with nine P.63.11 aircraft each by 1st May 1940, not including reserves, and a further 26 units equipped with six of the type each. Instructional units were to be established at Toulouse, Romilly, Sisteron and Saint-Etienne-de-Saint-Geoirs to hurriedly train instructors to convert the G.A.O.'s to their new aircraft. From November 1939, the first units to convert at Toulouse each received three P.63.11's these were G.A.O.501, 502,

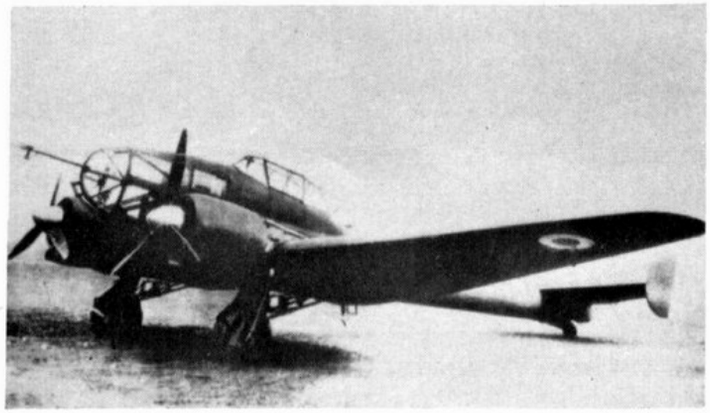
P.631 cockpit—note the painted reminder "Pensez au train"; "Remember the undercarriage!" (Photo via G. Dassenoy)



A Potez 631 of G.R.III/33 "Perigord" over Cazaux in May 1945.



Note the rounded nose in this view of the Potez 63.11 prototype.



505, 552, 4/551 and 546. By mid-January, 43 Potez 63.11's served with 12 G.A.O.'s, six of these *Groupes* being in the front-line.

To improve their defensive capabilities, most P.63.11's were fitted with supplementary guns, bringing their defensive armament up to six, eight or even ten machine-guns. The first machines were fitted with bomb-bays for use as light bombers, but machines delivered after 1st January 1940 were not so equipped and on aircraft from No. 366, the fuel capacity was increased from 950 (209 Imp. Gals.) to 1,120 litres (246 I.G.).

The *Armée de l'Air* had accepted 459 P.63.11 aircraft by 14th March 1940, 217 of these with Gnome-et-Rhône 14 M6/M7 engines and Gnome-et-Rhône airscrews, 95 with Gnome-et-Rhône 14 M4/M5 engines and Levasseur airscrews and 147 with wooden fixed-pitch Ratier two-blade airscrews. Of these 459 aircraft, 294 had been allocated to operational use (109 with G.R.'s and 42 in use with G.A.O.'s and 49 being fitted with reinforced armament).

THE "BLITZKRIEG" PERIOD

At the advent of the "*Blitzkrieg*" on France, on 10th May 1940, the home-based Potez 63 variants were disposed in operational units as follows:

Potez 631; *Flottille* F1C (*Escadrilles* AC1 and AC2) at Calais-Marck. E.C.M.I/16 at Wez-Thuisy (part of *Groupement de Chasse* No. 23). *Groupement de Chasse de Nuit* (for night defence of the Paris area): E.C.N. I/13 at Le Plessis-Belleville, 2/13 at Meaux-Esbly, 3/13 at Melun-Villaroche and 4/13 at Betz-Bouillancy.

E.C.N. 5/13 at Lyons-Bron (night defence of the Lyons-Etienne and Le Creusot area).

Potez 633; G.B.A. II/51 (11 aircraft) in the process of conversion to Bréguet 693's.

Potez 637; (mixed with Potez 63.11 and Bloch 174). G.R.II/33 at Athies-sous-Laon (strategic G.R. of 1st D.Aé.).

G.R. II/52 at Couvron (recce, Groupe of IXth Land Army).

GR. I/52 at Saint-Dizier (strategic *Groupe* of 3rd D.Aé.).

G.R.I/33 at Dôle (strategic *Groupe* of 6th D.Aé.).

Potez 63.11; Out of 691 on charge, 396 were allocated to G.R.'s or G.A.O.'s and 238 of these were actually available in the first-line. Thirty-three further machines had been sent to North Africa and 19 to Syria.

Groupes de Reconnaissance; (One attached to each Land Army). I/35 at Saint-Omer-Wizerne (VIIth Land Army), I/14 at Saint-Simon-Clastres, formerly 14th *Groupe Autonome* (1st L.A.), II/22 at Chatel-Chehery (IInd L.A.), I/22 at Metz-Frescaty (IIIrd L.A.), I/36 at Martigny-lès-Gerbonveaux (IVth L.A.), II/36 at Neufchâteau-Azelot (Vth L.A.), I/55 at Lure-Malbouhans (VIIIth L.A.), II/14, forming at Valence (*Alpes* Army), and II/55 in reserve at Chambarand-Marcilloles (VIth L.A.).

Groupes Aériens d'Observation; Thirty-four *Groupes* had received a mean allocation of six P.63.11's and six units had only two or three machines at their disposal (these latter being 2/514, 581, 582, 1/584. 1/589 and G.A.M.550). These units were distributed among the Land Armies at a rate of one to each Army Corps, Cavalry Corps or Light Armoured or Mechanised Division.

The distribution was as follows:

VIIth Land Army: G.A.O.501 at Dunkerque-Mardyck, 516 at Calais-St.-Inglevert, 552 at St.-Omer-Wizerne.

Ist Land Army: G.A.O.503 at Valenciennes, 504 at Denain-Prouvy, 505 at Vertain-Le Quesnoy, 502 at La Fere-Courbes, 544 at Villers-lès-Guise.

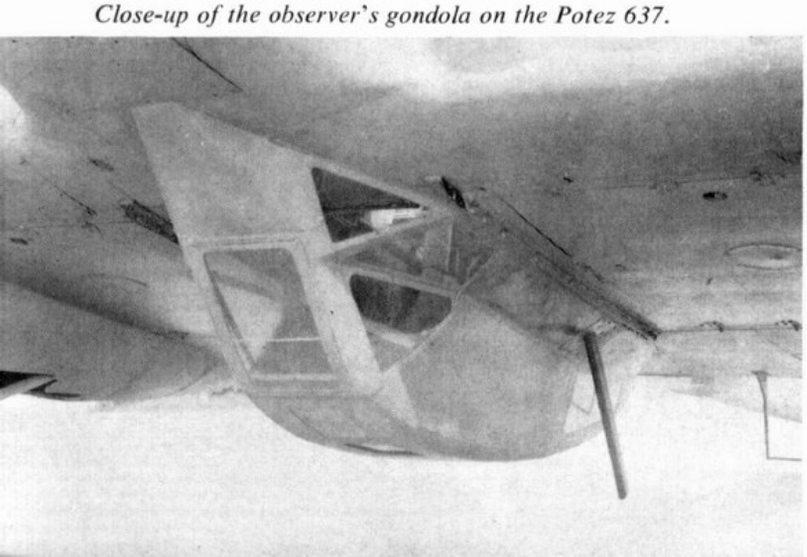
IXth Land Army: G.A.O.511 at Villers-lès-Guise, 547 at Mezières Tournes-Belval, 2/551 at Tournes-Belval, 545 at Denain-Prouvy, G.A.O.4/551 at Le Quesnoy.

IInd Land Army: G.A.O.2/520 at Challerange, 510 at Attigny, 518 at Challerange, 507 at Attigny.

IIIrd Land Army: G.A.O.2/506 at Chambley, I/506 at Conflans-Doncourt, II/508 at Mars-la-Tour, I/551 at Etain-Buzy, 3/551 at Senon-Spincourt.

IVth Land Army: G.A.O.509 at Delme-Essey, 520 at Morhange.

Close-up of the observer's gondola on the Potez 637.



Vth Land Army: G.A.O.548 at Epinal-Dogneville, 512 at La Perthe, 517 at Neufchâteau, 553 at Nancy-Azelot, 546 (in reserve) at Sézanne.
VIIIth Land Army: G.A.O.543 at Luxeuil-St-Sauveur, 513 at Belfort-Chaux.
Armee des Alpes: G.A.O.I/584 at Valence, 2/514 at St.Etienne-de-St-Geoirs, I/514 at Montbard-Touillon. In reserve: G.A.O.581 at Marignane, 582 at Valence, I/589 at Fayence-Sisteron, G.A.M.550 (observation flight) at Ghisonaccia (defence of Corsica.

Space does not permit the full story of the Potez 63 in the Battle of France in this *Profile*, but the following section should give an idea of the overall picture.

The most successful Potez 631 unit was *Flottille* F1C of the *Aéronavale* which, operating over the North Sea between 10th and 21st May 1940, shot down 12 enemy aircraft for a loss of eight of its own machines. The unit was then withdrawn to re-equip with Bloch 151's and Dewoitine 520's and did not fight again before the Armistice.

The four E.C.N.'s reponsible for the night defence of Paris were ordered to attack German motorised columns on 17th May. Twenty-four P.631's took part in this mission, two being seen to be destroyed by "flak" and four further machines failing to return to base.

As related in the introduction, the Potez 63 was often confused with the Bf 110 by the Allied ground and air forces. A machine of E.C.N.3/13 was shot down by three M.B.152's of G.C.I/1 on 23rd May and, as a result, it was decided to adopt distinctive markings on the Potez 631. The measure became effective the following day and resulted in all P.631's being marked with a broad white band on the fuselage sides on either side of the French roundel; the roundel was increased in size also outlined in white. In all, the six *Armée de l'Air* P.631 *Escadrilles* scored about 17 "kills".

G.B.A.II/51 still had eight P.633's on strength (and five Bréguet 693's) when it moved to Etampes, in company with G.B.A.I/51, to reinforce *Groupement* 18 on 19th May. Between 20th and 30th May, six of these machines were lost to the enemy.

G.R.II/52 was the only one of the four Potez 637 *Groupes de Reconnaissance* to have no Bloch 174's on strength, but in 16 days fighting it lost all its P.637's. Late in May it was fully re-equipped with P.63.11 machines and on 17th June the unit withdrew to Bordeaux to receive Bloch 175's.

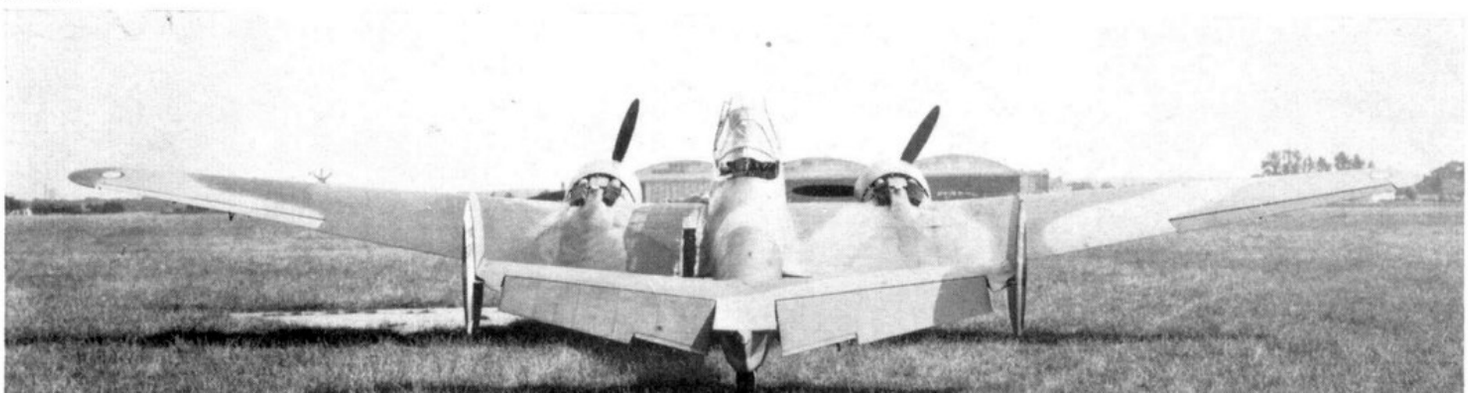
At dawn on 10th May, G.R.II/33 possessed seven P.637, six P.63.11 and four Bloch 174 aircraft. It was reinforced on 18th May by two P.631's of E.C.N.I/16, on 19th May by a 5th *Escadrille* of six P.63.11's and also took delivery of nine more Bloch 174's before the Armistice. Late in June at Algiers-Maison Blanche, its operational strength was just five Bloch 174's, all the other machines being either lost on operations or abandoned during the retreat from one airstrip to another.

Due to an almost complete lack of spares, about 70% of the P.63.II's with the G.A.O.'s were unserviceable at the time of the German onslaught. A large number of machines were destroyed on the ground by enemy bombing and strafing and, due to the disorganisation that accompanied the German attack, some units were put out of action without flying a single mission. Those that did get into action suffered heavy losses making low-altitude sorties in an attempt to keep in touch with events on the ground. Fighter cover was rarely available because of the shortage of Allied fighters. As an example of the difficulties, G.A.O. 510 made 25 operational sorties, lost 12 aircraft (six on the ground) and moved to 14 different airstrips during a period of six weeks.

During the campaign, few reserve machines were available; the actual figures of reserve aircraft for all operational units were nine P.631's and 51 P.63.11's between 10th and 31st May, and six P.631's and 41 P.63.11's between 1st and 10th June.

Shortly after the armistice a census revealed the

Potez 63.11 No. 1 during acceptance trials at Villacoublay; in rear view, note the small upper wing markings displayed at the outbreak of war.



Potez 63.11 No. 192 of 14th Groupe Autonome de Reconnaissance *at Martigny-les-Gerbonveaux in December 1939.* (Photo via G. Botquin)

following numbers of surviving machines:

In the French Free Zone: 32 P.630, 112 P.631, 18 P.633, 12 P.637 and 221 P.63.11—a total of 395 machines.

North Africa: 251 P.63.11 and 53 P.630/631/633/637 aircraft.

Syria: 17 P.63.11 machines.

The difference between these figures and the number taken on charge before the armistice gives a good idea of the losses suffered. About 400 machines were lost, although this figure included about 10 aircraft that escaped to British territories.

F.A.F.L. POTEZ 63's

Little information is available concerning the few Potez 63's which served in the F.A.F.L. (*Forces Aériennes Francaises Libres*—Free French Air Forces). On 29th January 1941 there were three Potez 63, one Dewoitine 520 and five Bloch 151/152 aircraft. Free French Flight No. 2 formed early in 1940 at Haifa was originally established with three M.S.406 and two Potez 63 aircraft and attached to No. 274 Squadron, R.A.F. These machines were later reinforced by a few further machines of the Vichy Air Force that escaped from Syria.

SERVING WITH THE VICHY AIR FORCE

The Germans allowed the following Potez 63 units to continue in existence with the *Armée de l'Air de l'Armistice* (Vichy Air Force):

Southern France: E.C.N.1/13 and 3/13 (actually the former 4/13) at Nimes-Courbessac (part of *Groupement de Chasse* 23 equipped with the P.631), G.R.I/14 at Perpignan, II/14 at Avignon and II/22 at Montpellier.

Morocco: G.R.I/22 at Rabat.

Algeria: G.R. L/36 at Sétif.

Syria: G.R.II/39 at Damascus and G.A.O.I/583 at Aleppo, both units retaining the P.63.11.

Late in July 1940 G.R.I/22 converted to the Martin 167F and during the following September G.R.I/52 was reformed at Marrakech with Potez 63.11's. G.R.II/63 was reformed at Casablanca with Martin 167F's late in December 1940 and moved to Bamako in September 1941, exchanging its machines at Thiès for Potez 63.11's during the following month.

The *Escadrille de Surveillance* at Ivato-Tananarive (Madagascar) was reformed as *Escadrille de Renseignements* No. 555 on 1st April 1941 and equipped with P.63.11's in July. In February 1942 it amalgamated with the M.S.406-equipped *Escadrille de Chasse* No. 565 to form a *Groupe Aérien Mixte* at Ivato with a detached flight at Diego-Suarez. Early in May 1942 this unit was involved in combat with Allied forces after retreating to Anivorane, losing four P.63.11's. The *Groupe Aérien Mixte* was disbanded after the occupation of Madagascar by South African forces.

E.C.N.3/13 moved from Nimes to Gabès (Tunisia) in June 1941 as a provisional reinforcement for the D.520-equipped G.C.II/7 of *Groupement de Chasse* 24.

G.R.II/39 and G.A.O.I/583 were involved in the Syria compaign and lost several crews in operation before being disbanded in July 1941.

Aéronavale Escadrille 4B was reformed at Blida during the winter of 1941-42 as *Escadrille* 4BR (*Bombardement-Reconnaissance*) and equipped with Potez 63.11's. The unit moved to Algiers-Maison Blanche early in November 1942.

The Vichy Air Force strength on 1st November 1941 included 22 P.630 (used for training), 82 P.631, six P.637 and 236 P.63.11 machines; twelve months later, a few days before the Allied landings in North Africa, these figures had dwindled to six P.630, 64 P.631 and 114 P.63.11 aircraft.

END OF A CAREER

As a result of the invasion of the Free Zone of France and the occupation of Vichy Air Force bases by the Germans, G.R. I/14, II/14 and II/22 were disbanded on 27th November 1942.

The Germans seized 134 Potez 63's of all variants, although only 45 of these were immediately available. Of these, 53 were refurbished and sent to Rumania for use as trainers and target-tugs. Many of the Gnome-et-Rhône 14M 05/06 radials stored at *Bases de Stockage* as spares for Potez 63's were later used by the Germans to power Henschel Hs 129B's (see *Profile No. 69*).

On the first day of the Allied landings in North Africa, all the machines of G.R.I/52 were destroyed on the ground by American bombers. The Potez 631's of E.C.N.3/13 were used to cover the Gabès area against *Luftwaffe* action before being replaced late in November 1942; in January 1943, the unit became the 3rd *Escadrille* of the D.520-equipped G.C.I/3 at Ameur-el-Aïn. The 12 P.63.11's of G.R.II/63 were used to transport ammunition for the Allies in North Africa between 12th December 1942 and 3rd January 1943.

The last Potez 63's in operational use were three P.631's (including No. 185) that were recaptured from

Potez 63.11 No. 119 fitted with wooden Levasseur airscrews.

(Right) *P.63.11 of the 3rd Escadrille, G.R.II/39 in Syria, 1941; the underwing machine guns (two per wing) are apparent.* (Below) *close-up showing three machine guns installed under the centre-section of a Vichy Air Force P.63.11.*
(Flying view via M. Cristesco)

the enemy and flown alongside captured Fieseler Fi 156's by the F.F.I. (*Forces Francaises de l'Intérieur*) G.R.III/33 "Perigord" of the *Forces Aériennes de l'Atlantique* based at Cognac.

After the end of the war in Europe these three machines went to the C.E.V. (*Centre d'Essais en Vol*) at Bretigny-sur-Orge where they were used as trainers in the renascent French Air Force.

POTEZ 63 PRODUCTION

Potez 630:
1—No. 01 prototype, Henri Potez's private venture; civil airworthiness certificate in October 1938; redesignated as P.63 No. 2 mail aircraft, to Air Bleu as *F-ARIR*; handed over to the French Air Force 27/3/40.
4—No. 02 CN2 and 03 C3 prototypes and No. 1 and 2 C3 preproduction; letter of order 25/5/37 confirmed 21/12/37 by contract No. 813/7. No. 02 (C-514) delivered to the Rheims C.E.A.M. for night-fighting experiments. No. 03, 1, 2 registered C-511 to 513 (this being the *matricule militaire*).
1—No. 04 DC (*Double Command*=Dual Controls) instructional machine intended for Yugoslavia, eventually taken on charge by the F.A.F.
80—No. 3 to 82 C3. Letter of order 26/7/37 confirmed by contract 1049/7 of 21/12/37; registrations 3 to 72, C-515 to 584, 73 to 82, X-700 to 709.
1—Swiss order; delivered with Swiss armament as *B-2* also *HB-HAT*).
1—Yugoslavian order; P.630 No. 1Y delivered 1939.
TOTAL: 88 machines (two exported).
Potez 631:
3—01 C3, 02 and 04 INST (Instruction) prototypes; same contract as for P.630 prototypes. P.631-01 (c/n 4530) later refitted with Hispano-Suiza 14 Ab 02/03 engines. Cert. of Airworthiness No. 011621 on 6/1/39; redesignated P.63 No. 1 mail plane, to Air Bleu as *F-AREY*. No. 02 registered *F-ARQV* allotted to S.T.Aé. No. 04 (c/n 4531) delivered to Rumania 3/39 as instructional machine for the P.633 B2.
No information is available on a possible P.631-03.
10—No. 1 to 10 INST pre-production, also known as Potez 634; contract No. 1582/7 of 16/12/37; reg. X-662 to 671.
30—No. 11 to 40 C3; letter of order May 1937 confirmed 21/12/37 by contract 1049/7; reg. X-710 to 739. No. 40 refitted with Pratt & Whitney radials became P.63.12-01 prototype.
50—No. 41 to 90 C3; contract 1582/7 of 16/12/37 originally for P.633 B2 amended to P.631 on 25/5/38; reg. X-612 to 661.
65—No. 91 to 155 C3; contract 299/8 of 25/3/38 originally for P.633 B2 amended to P.631 on 20/5/38; reg. 91 to 130, X-760 to 799, 131 to 155,

Potez 63.11 of the Free French Flight No. 2 in Libya. The machine still carries on the fin the insignia of 2 Esc., G.R.II/39 from which it escaped. Note starboard undersurfaces painted white, port painted black. (Photo: I.W.M.)

POTEZ 63 SPECIFICATION

Powerplant: Potez 630—Two Hispano-Suiza 14 Ab 02/03 (No. 1 to 48) rated at 590 h.p. at sea level at 2,400 r.p.m., 670 h.p. at 4,000 m. (13,123 ft.) and 650 h.p. for take-off, driving Hispano-Hamilton 31M/32M airscrews. (From No. 49). Two Hispano-Suiza 14 Ab 10/11 of 640 h.p. at sea-level, 720 h.p. at altitude and 700 h.p. for take-off.
All other types—Two Gnome-et-Rhône 14 M4/M5 or M6/M7 (according to the airscrew fitted, either Ratier 1527/1528 or Gnome-et-Rhône 2190M/2191M) developing 570 h.p. at sea-level at 3,030 r.p.m., 660 h.p. at 5,000 m. (16,400 ft.) and 700 h.p. for take-off.
Dimensions: Span 16 m. (52 ft. 6 in.), length 11·07 m. (36 ft. 4 in.) except P.63.11—11·004 m. (36 ft. 1 in.), height 3·62 m. (11 ft. 10½ in.), gross wing area 32·7 sq. m. (351·98 sq. ft.), undercarriage track 3·7 m. (12 ft. 1½ in.), wing dihedral (on outer panels 5 35'.
Weights: Basic empty 2,450 kg. (5,401 lb.), normal loaded, P.630 3,850 kg. (8,488 lb.); P.631, 3,760 kg. (8,289 lb.); P.633, 4,500 kg. (9,921 lb.); P.637, 4,225 kg. (9, 314 lb.); P.63.11, 4,433 kg. (9,773 lb.).
Fuel tankage: P.630, P.631 and P.633, 765 l. (168 Imp. Gals.); P.637 and P.63.11 (up to No. 365) 950 l. (209 I.G.); P.63.11, 120 1. (245 I.G.).
Performance:
Potez 631: Maximum speed 442 km./h. (275 m.p.h.) at 4,500 m. (14,764 ft.), 360 km./h. (224 m.p.h.) at sea level; climb to 4,000 m. (13,123 ft.) 5 min. 56 sec.; range at 240 km./h. (149 m.p.h.) economical speed at 1,900 m. (6,234 ft.), 1,220 km. (758 ml.), at 430 km./h. (267 m.p.h.) at 5,900 m. (19,357 ft.) 760 km. (472 ml.).
Potex 637: Maximum speed 435 km./h. (270 m.p.h.) at 5,000 m. (16,400 ft.); climb to 8,000 m. (26,247 ft.) 18 min. 26 sec.; maximum range 1,550 km. (963 ml.) at 321 km./h. (198 m.p.h.) at 5,700 m. (18,700 ft.), 720 km. (447 ml.) at 403 km./h. (250 m.p.h.) at 3,800 m. (12,467 ft.).
Potez 63.11: Maximum speed 400-425 km./h. (249-264 m.p.h.) (according to the armament fitted) at 5,000 m. (16,400 ft.), 330-370 km./h. (205-230 m.p.h.) at sea level; climb to 2,000 m. (6,562 ft.) 4 min.; climb to 7,000 m. (22,966 ft.) 15 min. 41 sec.; maximum range 1,500 km. (932 ml.) at 300 km./h. (186 m.p.h.) at 4,500 m. (14,764 ft.).
Defensive armament:
Potez 631: Two fixed forward-firing Hispano-Suiza HS9 or 404 20 mm. cannon with 60+30 rounds per gun (one cannon and one machine-gun on some aircraft). One flexible rear 7·5 mm. MAC 1934 machine-gun with 1,000 r.p.g. Some machines were fitted with four supplementary fixed machine-guns in under wing fairings.
Potez 633 and *Potez 637:* One fixed forward-firing 7·5 mm. gun in the fuselage nose with 300 r.p.g., one flexible (500 r.p.g.) and one fixed (300 r.p.g.) machine-gun firing to the rear.
On some P.637 the flexible gun was replaced by twin flexible weapons.
Potez 63.11: Original armament similar to that of the P.633 except that the flexible gun had 600 rounds.
Successive reinforcements brought the armament of some machines up to:
Two forward and two rearward firing machine-guns, i.e. four in all.
Two forward and four rearward firing machine-guns, i.e. six in all.
Four forward (underwing) and four rearward firing machine-guns, i.e. eight in all.
Six forward (two in the fuselage and four underwing) and four rearward firing machine-guns, i.e. ten in all.
Offensive armament:
Potez 633: Eight 50 kg. (110 lb.) bombs in the fuselage bomb-bay.
Potez 63.11: (Only on aircraft delivered before 1/1/40). Eight 10 kg. (22 lb.) bombs in the fuselage and four 50 kg. (110 lb.) bombs under outboard wingracks.

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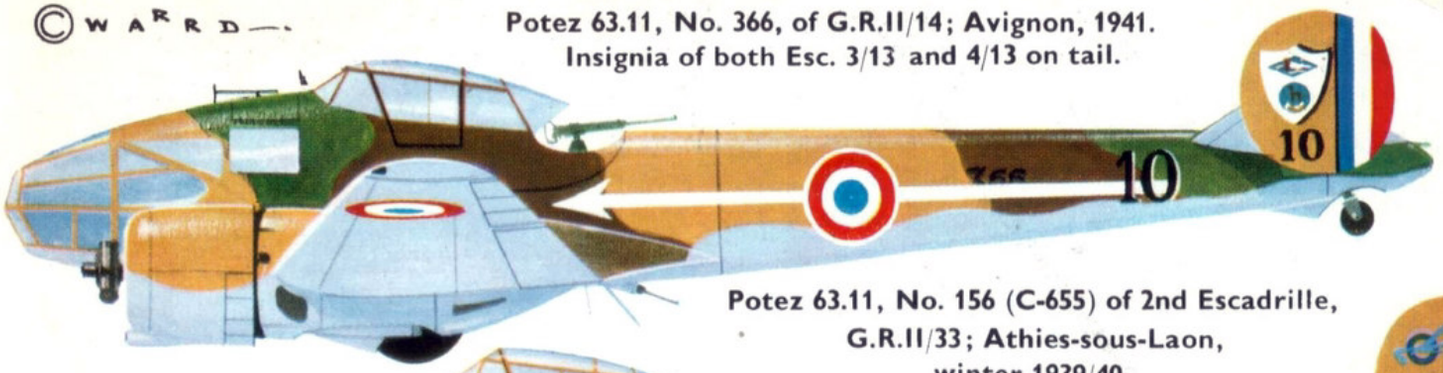
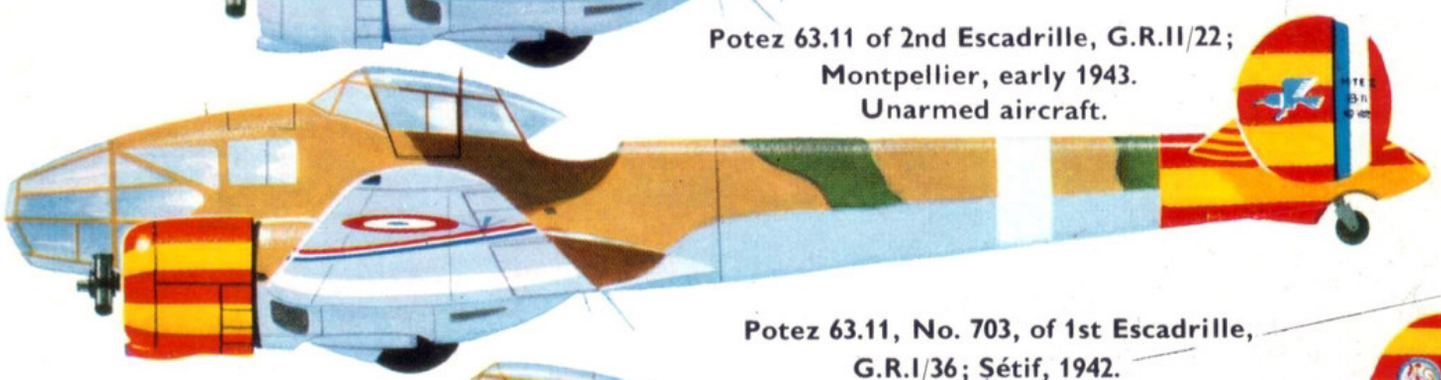
Potez 63.11, No. 366, of G.R.II/14; Avignon, 1941.
Insignia of both Esc. 3/13 and 4/13 on tail.

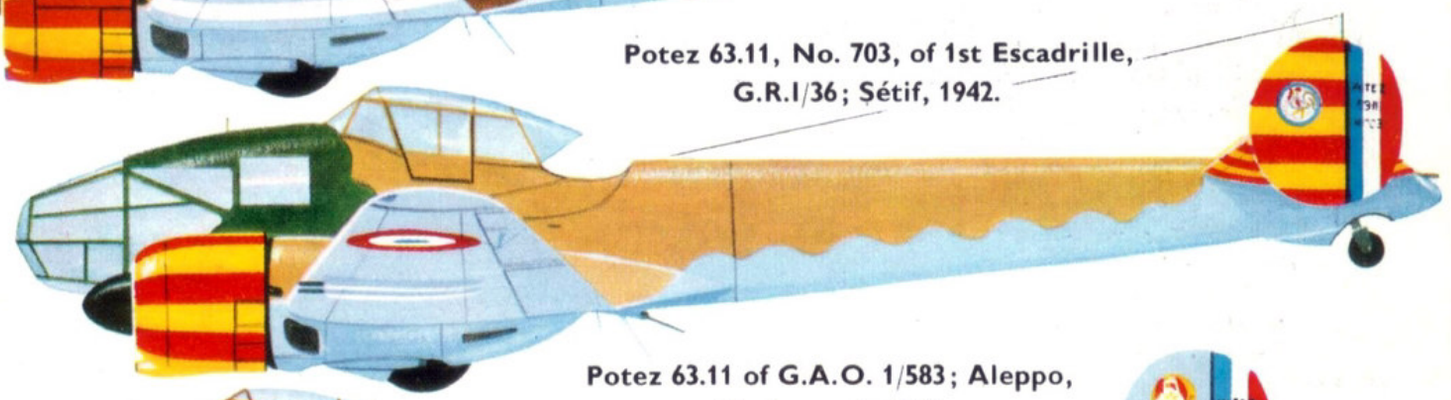


Potez 63.11, No. 156 (C-655) of 2nd Escadrille,
G.R.II/33; Athies-sous-Laon,
winter 1939/40.

Potez 63.11 of 2nd Escadrille, G.R.II/22;
Montpellier, early 1943.
Unarmed aircraft.



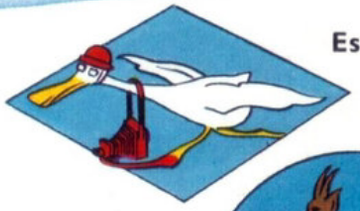
Potez 63.11, No. 703, of 1st Escadrille,
G.R.I/36; Sétif, 1942.



Potez 63.11 of G.A.O. 1/583; Aleppo,
Syria, early 1941.

Potez 63.11 of the Free Polish air
force element in France, April 1940.
Aircraft of the Observation Instructional
Escadrille at Lyons-Bron.

Esc. 3/13



Poland

G.R.I/36, 1 Esc.

G.R.II/22

G.R.II/33

Esc. 4/13

A Rumanian Potez 633 B2.
(Photo via M. Cristesco)

but replaced by P.639 AB2-01 and made available for export to China. Eventually taken on charge by F.A.F. reg. X-981.
4—Chinese order. Export forbidden and three ordered by contract 660/9 for ground attack experiments at Rheims C.E.A.M. Fourth Chinese machine (No. 6C) taken on charge March 1940. Reg. 5C, X-980; 7C, X-982; 8C, X-983 and 6C, X-984.
24—Greek order No. 9/38. No. 1G to 11G, 13G and 14G, i.e. 13 machines delivered to Greece in 1939. Remaining 11 taken on charge by F.A.F. reg. 12G, B-232, 15G to 24G, B-235 to 244.
1—Swiss order fitted with Hispano-Suiza engines and Swiss armament. Mfr.'s designation Potez 632; delivered early 1939 as *B-1* (civil *HB-HAS*).
20—Rumanian order No. 204/N/37 (money being invested by French Govt.) No. 1R to 20R delivered to Rumania by end 1938.
20—Franco-Rumanian order No. 271/8 of 26/4/38. No. 21R to 40R eventually taken on charge by F.A.F. in 1939 reg. X-740 to 759.
Note: For export purposes the P.633's were allotted provisional civil regs., e.g. *F-ARQP* (crashed in Greece 31/3/39 killing ferry pilot), *F-ARQQ*, *F-ARQR*, *F-ARQF*, *F-ARQU*, *F-ARRQ*, *F-ARUG* to *F-ARUR*.
TOTAL: 71 Potez 633 B2 (35 exported).

Potez 637 A3:
1—Potez 637-01 prototype on same order as P.630 prototypes; reg. X-508.
60—No. 1 to 60 A3 production. Contract 1218/8 of 12/8/38; reg. C-585 to 644. No. 44 exhibited at the Brussels show in July 1939.
TOTAL: 61 Potez 637 A3 (none exported).

Potez 639 AB2:
1—Potez 639-01 Replaced P.633-02 when letter or order for 10 prototypes replaced by contract 813/7.

Potez 63.11 A3:
3—01 to 03 prototypes (01 c/n 4898) to contract No. 905/8 of 29/7/38; reg. X-977 to 979. 02 and 03 taken on charge Sept. 1939.
145—No. 1 to 145 to contract 908/8 of 18/8/38; reg. J.804 to 970, less 22 allotted to other aircraft. First taken on charge No. 11 and 12 on 30/8/39. No. 114 taken on charge 19/4/40 fitted with new wing of increased area becoming Potez 63.16 No. 01 (c/n 4925).
70—No. 146 to 215 to 1218/8 of 21/9/38. C-645 to 714.
200—No. 216 to 415 to 187/9 of 16/12/38; reg. C-715 to 914.
150—No. 416 to 565 to 1138/9 of 18/4/39, reg. No. 416 to 500, C-915 to 999. Reduced to 60 aircraft in Aug. 1939, No. 416 to 455 and No. 486 to 505. No. 556 to 565 reserved for export to Rumania, remaining 80 without serials to delivered spare parts.
200—No. 566 to 1365. War contract 1949/9 of 12/9/39, later reduced to 725 machines for the F.A.F., 35 spares and 10 for Rumania.
At the time of the armistice, Potez 63.11 orders amounted to 1,534 not including spares. Altogether 723 had been taken on charge, 452 from Méaulte (including 21 completed at Evreux from 16th May 1940) and 271 assembled at Les Mureaux. The highest serial was No. 863 taken on charge 11/6/40 before the Les Mureaux plant fell into German hands. Rumanian P.63.11: None delivered before armistice. Ten handed over to Rumanian ferry pilots on 25/10/41 (No. 64, 71, 101, 119, 131, 135, 136, 141, 142 and 145).
Post-armistice P.63.11: No detailed information is available on the 120 machines completed for the *Luftwaffe* at Les Mureaux during 1941.
TOTAL POTEZ 63 PRODUCTION: Excluding the machines delivered as spares, total production is estimated at 1,395 aircraft, 1,115 being taken on charge by the F.A.F. as detailed in the table. The grand total includes 80 P.63.11's, so complete as to be flyable, seized at Méaulte by the *Luftwaffe* and later flown by German units.

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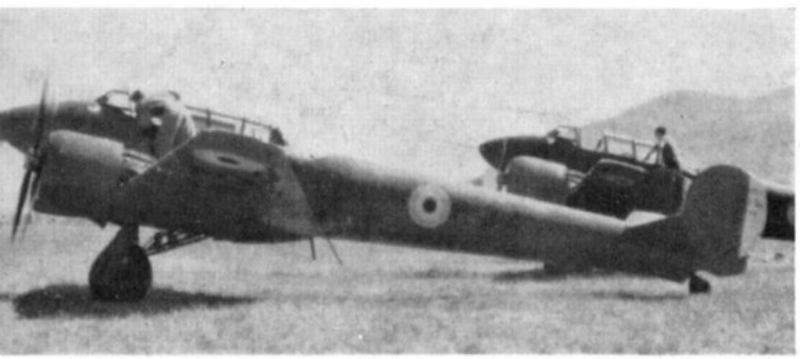

Note different pitot tubes on these two machines; the aircraft in the foreground is a Potez 633 B2, No. 34, late of the Rumanian batch; note R-34 on fuselage side. The matricule militaire *is X-753. The photograph was taken at Vinon in March 1940.*

X-900 to 924. No. 146 and 147 experimentally fitted with 6 m.g. underwing May 1939. No. 155 was fitted with a special cannon armament to be fired in diving flight.
52—No. 156 to 207 C3; contract 907/8 of 14/6/38; X-925 to 976.
4—Chinese order. Late in August 1939, while being delivered to China. No. 1C and 2C seized by Indochina general government and never reached China. No. 3C and 4C taken on charge by French A.F. April 1940.
1—Yugoslav order, Potez 631 No. 2Y; crashed 9/1/40 during acceptance tests prior to delivery.
TOTAL: 215 Potez 631 (one exported).

Potez 633 B2:
1—P.633-01 prototype (c/n 4578) same contract as P.630 prototypes; civil reg. *F-ARQC;* taken on charge by F.A.F.
1—P.633-02. Originally included in order for 10 various P.63 prototypes

Potez 63 Derivatives taken on charge by the French Air Force

	Aircraft Sub-types	1938								1939												1940					
		M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D	J	F	M	A	M	J
Monthly Deliveries	Potez 630	4	—	—	6	17	14	13	18	10	7	13	6	3	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	1	—	—
	Potez 631									17	17	27	31	40	24	16	7	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	2	—	—
	Potez 633	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	1	2	—	—	—	9	3	8	—	13	—	—	—	—	1	—	—	—
	Potez 637	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	9	18	17	8	9	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
	Potez 63/11	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	2	49	76	71	59	76	56	127	93	72	42
	All types	4	—	—	6	17	14	13	18	28	26	40	46	61	51	27	26	49	89	71	59	76	56	128	96	72	42
Cumulative figures at the end of each month	Potez 630	4	4	4	10	27	41	54	72	55	62	75	81	84	85	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	85	—	—
	Potez 631									44	61	88	119	159	183	199	206	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	208	—	—
	Potez 633	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	1	3	—	—	—	12	15	23	—	36	—	—	—	—	37	—	—	—
	Potez 637	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	9	27	44	52	61	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
	Potez 63/11	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	2	51	127	198	257	333	389	516	609	581	723
	All types	4	4	4	10	27	41	54	72	100	126	166	212	273	324	351	377	426	515	586	645	721	777	905	1011	1073	1115

Grand total 25/6/1940 — Potez 630: 85 — Potez 631: 208 — Potez 633: 37 — Potez 537: 61 — Potez 63/11: 723 — of all types: 1115

PRINTED IN ENGLAND. © Profile Publications Ltd., P.O. Box 26, Leatherhead, Surrey, England
by George Falkner & Sons Ltd., for McCorquodale City Printing Division, London.